

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8153

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USNATO, BRUSSELS 0248

AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 1233

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RO

SUBJECT: CEAUSESCU FORMALLY ELECTED, INSTALLED AS PRESIDENT

REF: BUCHAREST 1186

1. SUMMARY: AMIDST CORONATION-LIKE ATMOSPHERE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FORMALLY ELECTED, THEN INSTALLED CEAUSESCU AS PRESIDENT OF RSR. POSITIONING OF LEADERSHIP AT CEREMONY DID NOT CLARIFY NEW POWER RELATIONSHIPS BELOW PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL AND EMBASSY'S ROMANIAN CONTACTS STILL DO NOT KNOW HOW SUCH MATTERS AS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND NEW PERMANENT BUREAU WILL BE WORKED OUT. GNA ALSO FORMALLY INSTALLED MANESCU AS PRIME MINISTER AND ENACTED SEVERAL LAWS, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH APPARENTLY IS NEW PRESS LAW. END SUMMARY.

2. MAIN EVENT OF GNA SESSION'S FIRST DAY WAS CEAUSESCU'S FORMAL
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ELECTION AND INSTALLMENT AS PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC. MANY

ROMANIANS AND OTHERS HAVE REMARKED THAT CROWN WAS ALL THAT WAS LACKING IN NATIONALLY TELEVISED CORONATION-LIKE CEREMONY, WHICH INCLUDED SUCH UN-SOCIALIST ACCOUTERMENTS AS SASH OF OFFICE AND GOLDEN SCEPTER. BUCHAREST WAS DECKED OUT FOR OCCASION IN NATIONAL AND PARTY BANNERS AND NUMEROUS CEAUSESCU PORTRAITS IN MANNER NORMALLY RESERVED FOR AUGUST 23 AND MAY 1. APPLAUSE FOR CEAUSESCU AT CEREMONY WAS PROLONGED AND EACH EXCO MEMBER, INCLUDING THOSE WHO HAD BEEN DEMOTED, KISSED HIM ON BOTH CHEEKS AT CONSLUSION OF SWEARING IN.

3. THE POSITIONING OF TOP LEADERSHIP AT GNA SESSION GAVE NO CLUE AS TO NEW POWER RELATIONSHIPS BELOW PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL FOLLOWING CEAUSESCU AND MAURER (STILL TECHNICALLY CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT THAT POINT) EXCO MEMBERS FOLLOWED IN STRICT ALPHABETICAL ORDER, WITHOUT REGARD TO FORMER POSITIONS OR ROLE IN NEW PERMANENT PRESIDUM, WHICH PRESUMABLY HAS NOT YET BEEN FULLY FORMED. BODNARAS WAS NOT IN LINE-UP DUE TO OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES IN PROCEEDINGS BUT BRIEFLY CAME OVER TO STAND NEXT TO MAURER AND AHEAD OF BERGHIANU, MAKING HIS SPECIAL POSITION STILL EVIDENT. HOWEVER, SUCH OLD PRESIDUM MEMBERS AS NICULESCU-MIZIL, RADULESCU, PAF, ETC. WERE FAR DOWN THE LINE INSTEAD OF AT ITS HEAD AS BEFORE.

4. CEAUSESCU'S "SOLEMN SPEECH" UPON ASSUMING PRESIDENCY (SCINTEIA, MARCH 29) LARGELY KEPT TO STANDARD THEMES BUT DID EMPHASIZE NEED TO STRENGTHEN ARMED FORCES AND INCREASE COUNTRY'S DEFENSE CAPACITY. SPEECH ALSO CONTAINED REASSURANCE TO ALL COUNTRIES OF WORLD THAT ROMANIA WILL CONTINUE ITS FOREIGN POLICY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COLLABORATION, BASED ON OFT-REPEATED PRINCIPLES OF INTER-STATE RELATIONS. CEAUSESCU'S PLENUM SPEECH (SCINTEIA, MARCH 28), ON OTHER HAND, APPEARS NOTEWORTHY PRIMARILY FOR ASSERTION THAT THE EXTENSIVE PERSONNEL SHIFTS WERE DETERMINED BY NEED TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE IN ALL SECTORS OF NATIONAL LIFE.

5. ONE OF CEAUSESCU'S FIRST OFFICIAL ACTS IN NDUHTITION# WAS TO

ISSUE "PRESIDENTIAL DECREE" FORMALIZING VARIOUS PERSONNEL SHIFTS REPORTED REFTEL. THESE SHIFTS, EXCEPT FOR MAURER'S REPLACEMENT, ALL ARE MADE SOLELY ON CEAUSESCU'S AUTHORITY AS PRESIDENT. MAURER, ON OTHER HAND, WAS FORMALLY REMOVED AND REPLACED BY GNA FOLLOWING CONFIDENTIAL

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"CORONATION" CEREMONY.

6. TURNING TO MORE MUNDANE BUSINESS, GNA ALSO DEBATED AND ENACTED SEVERAL LAWS, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH APPEARS TO BE THE LONG-AWAITED PRESS LAW. DETAILS OF THE NEW LAW HAVE NOT BECOME AVAILABLE YET, BUT WIDESPREAD RUMOR INDICATES THAT THE LAW INVOLVES CLOSER PARTY SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF PRESS. EMBASSY ANALYSIS OF THIS AND OTHER NEW LAWS WILL FOLLOW ONCE THE TEXTS

BECOME AVAILABLE.

7. FOLLOWING ARE INDICATIONS FROM ROMANIAN SOURCES THAT SHED ADDITIONAL LIGHT ON MEANING OF RECENT PERSONNEL SHIFTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES. WORD IS SPREADING AMONG ROMANIANS AND DIPLOMATIC SOURCES THAT VIRGIL TROFIN'S NEW POSITION IS FIRST SECRETARY OF BRASOV COUNTY, WHICH MEANS HIS DEFINITE REMOVAL FROM INNER CIRCLE OF POWER AFTER LONG PROCESS OF GRADUAL DECLINE IN REAL POWER OVER PAST SEVERAL YEARS.

8. GHEORGHE OPREA, A PERSONAL CEAUSESCU COUNSELLOR WHO HAS BEEN ELEVATED TO BE A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS VICE-PRESIDENT, TOLD GERMAN REPRESENTATIVES OF GUTTEHOFFNUNGSHUTTE (THE FIRM ENGAGED IN LARGEST JOINT VENTURE WITH ROMANIA THUS FAR) THAT HE (A) WOULD CONTINUE TO BE PRESIDENTIAL COUNSELLOR IN ADDITION TO HIS OTHER DUTIES, (B) WOULD SUPERVISE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION MINISTRIES (SPECIFICALLY MENTIONING CHEMICAL INDUSTRY, AND HEAVY MACHINE BUILDING AS EXAMPLES) AND (C) WOULD SUPERVISE ALL JOINT VENTURES WITH FOREIGN ENTERPRISES. OPREA IS KNOWN TO US AS A RETIRING AND ALMOST OBSEQUIOUS MEMBER OF CEAUSESCU'S PERSONAL ENTOURAGE BUT, IN VIEW OF HIS PERSONAL RELATION WITH PRESIDENT, WILL PERHAPS BE ABLE TO ENSURE CEAUSESCU'S PERSONAL ATTENTION TO JOINT ENTERPRISE QUESTION.

9. POSITION AND POWERS OF NEW PERMANENT BUREAU OF PARTY REMAIN SOMEWHAT UNCLEAR - APPARENTLY ALSO TO MANY ROMANIANS. IN TYPICAL CONVERSATION YESTERDAY, RELATIVELY SENIOR GOR OFFICIAL SAID HE BELIEVED NEW BUREAU WOULD BE SOMEWHAT LIKE OLD PRESIDIU EXCEPT THAT ITS MEMBERSHIP WAS UTTERLY DEPENDENT ON SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS HELD BY ITS MEMBERS (WHICH IN TURN ARE NOW DEPENDENT ON PRESIDENTIAL WHIM THROUGH POWER OF DECREE - SEE PARA 4 ABOVE). WHEN IT WAS NOTED TO THIS SOURCE THAT AT LEAST ONE AUTOMATIC MEMBER OF NEW BUREAU IS NOT MEMBER OF EXCO (STEFAN ANDREI) AND SEVERAL ARE ONLY CANDIDATE MEMBERS (DALEA, MIRON CONSTANTINESCU, BURTICA), SOURCE CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPRESSED STRONG BELIEF THAT ALL BUREAU MEMBERS WILL BECOME FULL MEMBERS OF EXCO ALMOST AUTOMATICALLY SINCE BUREAU WILL CLEARLY BE MORE POWERFUL THAN EXCO. COMMENT: THIS WOULD REQUIRE FURTHER CHANGES AT SUBSEQUENT PARTY PLENUM OR PARTY CONGRESS; ITS BASIS IN FACT IS OPEN TO QUESTION BUT IT DOES ILLUSTRATE BOTH CONFUSION AMONG CADRES AND INCOMPLETE NATURE OF REORGANIZATION NOW BEING EFFECTED BY CEAUSESCU MACHINE ON STEP-BY-STEP BASIS.

10. ALSO OF INTEREST IS HIGHLY NEGATIVE REACTION OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR, DANISH AMBASSADOR AS DEAN SUGGESTED TO NUMBER OF AMBASSADORS PRESENT THAT MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS BE SENT IN NAME OF CORPS. AFTER AGREEMENT OF SEVERAL WESTERN AND NEUTRAL AMBASSADORS, SOVIET AMBASSADOR WAS APPROACHED AND STATED HIS VIGOROUS REFUSAL SAYING MESSAGE COULD BE SENT ONLY IF UNANIMOUS APPROVAL GIVEN AND SOVIET RESPONSE WOULD BE NEGATIVE. SOVIET

AMBASSADOR RETURNED LATER TO DEAN AND AGREED TO MESSAGE PROVIDED
IT WOULD BE DELAYED TO FOLLOWING DAY. NEGATIVE SOVIET ATTITUDE,
SECONDED MORE CALMLY BY SOVIET ALLIES, WAS NECESSARILY PASSED
TO SENIOR ROMANIAN MFA OFFICIALS BY DEAN.
BARNES

NOTE BY OCT: #AS RECEIVED. WILL SERVICE UPON REQUEST.

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